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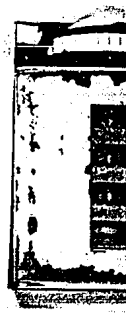

PROGRESS OF POLISH ASTRONOMY

Astronomicheskiy Zhurnal, Vol 30, No 6
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Voldemar Zonn

Polish astronomy did not flourish during the 20-year period of capitalistic control due to lack of coordination between the various observatories and astronomers, but progressed much during the last 7 postwar years.

The oldest of Polish observatories is that of Cracow. Its present director, T. Banachewicz, attempted to introduce "cosmic time", which is independent of terrestrial time and based on minima of eclipsing binaries. He organized observations of these minima by visual means with the cooperation of astronomers of other observatories. These astronomers were K. Kordylewski, J. Gadomski, A. Pagaczewski, I. Witkowski, S. Piotrkowski, I. Szczerbak, P. Pegza, R. Szafraniec, H. Strazalkowski, and A. Szczepanowa. The Cracow observatory publishes annual ephemerides of minima of all observable eclipsing binaries. Unfortunately, no conclusive results could be obtained from Banachewicz's 30-year compilation of these minima.

The organizer and director of Vilna observatory is Prof W. Dziewulski, a former associate of Prof K. Schwarzschild [Goettingen]. Dziewulski's work is centered on observation of Cepheides. He was assisted in his research by Kowalczewski, Iwanowska, Ehrenfeucht, Zonn, and Gesundheit.

In 1946, this observatory and its staff were transferred to Torn. Under the guidance of Professors Dziewulski and Iwanowska, their work consisted in the search for new variables and photometry of the solar corona. Photographs from Greece were used for this last study.

In 1936, an observatory was founded in Lwow under the initiative and guidance of Prof Eugen Rybka, who was mainly interested in photographic photometry. After the war, the Lwow astronomers moved to Wroclaw where photometry of variables was continued.

The Warsaw observatory, before the war under the directorship of Michel Kamienski, was virtually wiped out. The observatory was transferred to suburban Ostrowik, where a 25-centimeter reflector constitutes the whole equipment. Continued work on eclipsing binaries is planned.

The small observatory of the Warsaw Polytechnic, headed by Prof Felix Kepinski, was also destroyed during the war. It prepared and continues to teach new cadres of geodesists and cartographers.

Poznan observatory was founded in 1923. It is directed by Prof I. Witkowski and its main interest is astrometric observations of minor planets. Soviet astronomers want this observatory to study fluctuations of the pole.

The equipment of Polish observatories is definitely inadequate and, therefore, only astronomical computations can be successfully accomplished. During the 20-year period computational work was carried out by Prof M. Kamienski on perturbations of the periodic Wolf comet, and by Prof F. Kepinski on the Kopff comet. Prof T. Banachewicz published his "Cracoviana", which are special formulas for geodesists.

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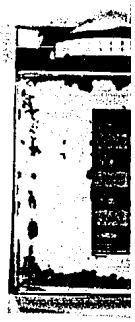

However, there is some hope for the establishment of a Central Astronomical Observatory, under the auspices of the newly organized (1951) Polish Academy of Sciences. The future Central Observatory is supposed to work in astrospectroscopy and in photometry.

More books and articles in astronomy were published in Poland during the last 7 years than during the whole prewar period of the independent existence of Poland.

The following books will be published: "General Astronomy," by E. Rybka; "Spherical Astronomy," by I. Witkowski; "Astrophysics," by W. Zonn; "Mathematical Fundamentals of Astronomy," by Wierzbicki; and "Astronomical Fundamentals of Geography," by A. Opolski. In addition, some lithographed university manuals will be issued: "General Astronomy," by K. Zonn; Spherical and Practical Astronomy," by M. Kepinski; "Mathematical Methods in Astronomy," by T. Banachiewicz; and "Theory of Observational Errors," by A. Zonn.

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